

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 COME-00 IO-14 /093 W
-----018818 132206Z /61

R 130719Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5386
INFO USDA FAS WASHDC
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN

UNCLAS BERLIN 06752

E.O.11652:N/A
TAGS: EAGR, GE
SUBJECT: PROGRESS OF 1977 HARVEST

REF: BERLIN 6698

1. SUMMARY: AUGUST 11 NEUES DEUTSCHLAND (ND) DEVOTED ENTIRE FRONT PAGE TO DISCUSSION OF RAIN-THREATENED 1977 HARVEST. REPORTING CONTINUES TO AVOID NEGATIVISM; URGENCY ATTACHED BY PRESS TO THE HARVEST AND HARVESTING METHODS BEING ADVOCATED, HOWEVER, LEAVE LITTLE DOUBT THAT RAINS HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY DAMAGED WHAT ONCE MIGHT HAVE BEEN A BOUNTIFUL HARVEST. END SUMMARY.

2. LEAD ARTICLE IN AUGUST 11 ND CONCERNED THE VISIT OF POLITBURO MEMBER GERHARD GRUNEBERG TO FIELDS TO DISCUSS HARVEST WITH MEMBERS OF PRODUCTION UNIT. ARTICLE PROVIDED FORMAT FOR OUTLINING OFFICIAL POLICY ON HARVEST. LOCAL PARTY LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN PUT ON NOTICE THAT THE COMPLETION OF THE HARVEST AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE WITH MINIMAL LOSS IS NOW THE MOST IMPORTANT TASK BEFORE THEM. MOREOVER, PRODUCTION UNITS ARE NOW BEING REQUIRED TO WORK
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IN TWO SHIFTS TO COMPLETE GRAIN HARVESTS. IN SIGNIFICANT SHIFT IN LANGUAGE, ND SPEAKS OF LOWERING LOSSES, RATHER THAN RAISING PRODUCTION OF GRAIN.

3. AS OF AUGUST 11 ONLY 849,059 HECTARES, OR 34.4 PERCENT OF TOTAL AREA SOWN IS REPORTED HARVESTED, COMPARED WITH 72 PERCENT OF TOTAL AREA AT THIS TIME LAST

YEAR AND 65 PERCENT IN 1975. TWO THIRDS OF 130,000
HECTARES PLANTED WITH OILSEEDS HAS BEEN HARVESTED, WHILE
AT THIS TIME LAST YEAR OVER 90 PERCENT HAD BEEN HARVESTED.
STRAW HAS BEEN GATHERED FROM
574,903 HECTARES.

4. EMBASSY COMMENT: PRESS HAS AVOIDED REPORTING
CONDITION OF BREADGRAINS AND EARLY POTATOES DURING
ENTIRE HARVEST, WHICH IS NOW ABOUT THREE WEEKS BEHIND
SCHEDULE. WHEAT HAS APPARENTLY BEEN MOST SEVERELY
DAMAGED GRAIN, THOUGH QUANTITATIVE INFORMATION IS
UNAVAILABLE. MANY OF THE UNHARVESTED FIELDS NOW SHOW
EXTENSIVE LODGING OF GRAIN. BEFORE ADVENT OF RAINS,
WHICH CONTINUE, IT APPEARED THAT VEGETABLE AND ROOT
CROPS WOULD BE SMALLER THAN DESIRED. GRAIN, HOWEVER,
APPEARED TO BE IN PARTICULARLY GOOD
CONDITION AND HOPES HAD BEEN HIGH FOR GOOD HARVEST.
THE ND ARTICLE SIGNALS THAT THE TASK OF BRINGING IN THE
HARVEST NOW TAKES PRIORITY OVER ALL OTHER CIVILIAN
PROJECTS IN THE GDR. END COMMENT. POLANSKY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, PRESS COMMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 13-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BERLIN06752
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770293-0175
Format: TEL
From: BERLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770865/aaaacciw.tel
Line Count: 82
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 4934f25a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 BERLIN 6698
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1610463
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROGRESS OF 1977 HARVEST
TAGS: EAGR, EPAP, GC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/4934f25a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009